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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 30, 2008

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PRESS RELEASE

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SMALL AND MEDIUM BUSINESS DISCUSSES TAX REFORM

Dushanbe, Tajikistan. An important roundtable to discuss tax issues was conducted on May 21, 2008 in Dushanbe, and organized by the National Association of Small and Medium Business (NASMB) of Tajikistan, with financial and technical support from the USAID Business Environment Improvement (BEI) project in collaboration with the State Committee on Investments and State Property Management. NASMB in partnership with the USAID BEI project is developing recommendations on how to simplify tax administration.

The main objectives of the roundtable were the presentation of NASMB financial-economic analysis of the current Tax Code, identification of barriers, and develop recommendations on the simplification of tax administration. Experts and consultants from the USAID Business Environment Improvement project, in collaboration with NASMB experts, developed recommendations aimed at improving the existing legislation of Tajikistan. Participants included official government representatives, entrepreneurs, NASMB leadership, and media representatives.

The simplification of tax administration and the reduction of the tax burden on entrepreneurs was identified as one of the most effective ways to enhance economic development, attract outside investment, and develop regional cooperation, as Tajikistan continues to integrate into the world economy. The improvement of tax legislation will allow businesses to expand production and increase employment, which will in turn reduce labor migration, increase competitiveness, and improve the investment climate of Tajikistan for internal and external investors.

Similar roundtables were conducted with the private and public sector representatives in Khatlon oblast-Qurghon-Teppa on April 4, 2008, and Sughd oblast-Khujand on April 11, 2008.

The National Association of Small and Medium Business of Tajikistan is a non commercial business association representing the interests of entrepreneurs of Tajikistan since 1993. NASMB represents 51 member companies that employ approximately 2,000 people operating across nearly every business sector in Tajikistan.

The USAID Business Environment Improvement Project is one of the many assistance projects made possible by the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Since 1993, the American people through USAID have provided Tajikistan about \$300 million in programs that support Tajikistan's health care sector, democratic institutions, education, and economic growth.

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